

**MINUTES OF THE ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING,
HELD MONDAY, JUNE 2, 2014, 7:00 P.M.,
4TH FLOOR, CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER
BUILDING, 888 WASHINGTON BLVD,
STAMFORD, CT 06901**

Present for the Board: Tom Mills, Barry Michelson, Rosanne McManus, William Morris, David Stein and Joanna Gwozdzowski. Present for staff: Norman Cole, Land Use Bureau Chief and David Killeen, Associate Planner

Mr. Mills called the meeting to order at 7:13 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Application 214-05 - RB STAMFORD ASSOCIATES, LLC** Site Plan/Requested Uses and Special Exception approval related to a mixed-use development including 672 residential units, a public café, indoor and outdoor community amenity space and a resident parking area which will be integrated below the building as well as other site improvements. The subject site, referred to as Urban Renewal Plan Parcel 38A & 38B (also known as “the hole in the ground”), is located at the northeast intersection of Greyrock Place and Tresser Boulevard and consists of approximately 4.32 acres.

Mr. Mills read a description of the application into the record. Mr. Michelson read the Planning Board referral letter into the record.

Attorney William Hennessey, Carmody Torrance Sandak & Hennessey, LLP, described the application and the Special Exception requests which are subject to URC approval of Land Disposition Agreement S.E. Quadrant Plan amendments. He described uses and character of development surrounding the site and described the mix of studios, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units plus public Café at the corner of Greyrock and Tresser. Parking will support 571 self-parked spaces (85% of unit count) with management strategies to provide more spaces if needed.

The Project Architect, Erikjan Vermeulen, described the concept of URL “Urban Ready Living” and presented site plans and architecture. Almost 50% of the façade is glass. The signage can be art integrated into the building. EIFS materials are primarily on the interior courtyard facades.

Linda Gumeny, Landscape Architect, described the rail trail streetscape. Raised planters and plants will provide about a 5-foot high buffer to the units.

Attorney Hennessey described each of the requested Special Exceptions: 1) large scale development; 2) convert commercial FAR to residential; 3) footnote 7 – 100% building coverage (at 94%); 4) parking ratio at 1 space per 1 unit.

Mr. Mills asked if anyone from the public wanted to speak. Sandy Goldstein, DSSD, spoke in support of the project.

Mr. Mills called a brief recess at 8:13pm and resumed the public hearing at 8:45pm.

Fernando Alvarez spoke in support of the project. This will address housing for YUPPIS (young urban professionals) and will develop a critical vacant parcel.

Maureen Boylin, spoke in support of the project but did not like the sign.

Mr. Mills returned discussion to the Board Members.

Ms. McManus asked if through block walkway was public. Attorney Hennessey said no. She asked if the HVAC would be hidden from view. Response was louvered vents in façade would shield equipment. Glenn Haydu, Executive Architect, responded that rooftop HVAC units would be provided for each corridor and some condenser units would be located behind the sign.

Mr. Michelson asked how the units would be used and occupied? The architect said they will be affordable to young people seeking their first apartments. Tom Rich said they will be at the lower end of the market due to their smaller size. Mr. Michelson asked will that allow for unrelated roommates to share the apartment? Response was there may be 2 people in a 2-bedroom.

Mr. Morris asked how they'll achieve the 1 spot to 1 unit parking? Richard Redniss passed out a letter from RFR (Stamford Forum). It identified public parking in properties within easy walking distances. He described "tandem assist" strategy to increase the parking count and other available techniques (stackers; valet; zip cars). Plus they will provide shuttle bus services.

Mr. Stein asked if parking is "unbundled"? The response was yes. Mr. Stein asked if visitors would be able to park? Response was yes on a space available basis.

Mr. Mills asked if parking demand data would be reported every 6-months? The response was yes.

Mr. Stein asked how they could avoid the fortress appearance? Can they not connect the building to the street somehow? The Architect said the Café is public and the units come down to grade. Mr. Stein asked if traffic through the Café might cause congestion? Response was no because of the placement of the tables and the design of the circulation. Tom Rich said they want to encourage interaction in the lobby. Dave Barry from Ironstate (part of the development team), said the Café is a casual eating area.

Ms. Gwozdzowski asked for an explanation of the dimension and design of the pool area. The Architect explained. She asked if green roofs were a possibility? The answer was no.

Mr. Michelson asked if there were options for the EIFS? The Architect said the exterior facades are granite, GFRC and metal panels. He asked if there were options to the sign? The Architect said they will commission some artistic expression and not necessarily the text. The plan is to have it backlit with a soft glow.

Mr. Mills asked if the tenants will select their own window blinds? The response was no; those will be provided.

Mr. Morris asked how will winter landscaping be handled? The landscape architect said grasses will not be cut back.

Attorney Hennessey described how the DSSD has a long term goal of adding a lane of on-street parking along Tresser Blvd.

Mr. Mills announced that the Public Hearing on this application would be continued to June 9 at 7:00pm on the 7th floor unless accommodations can be made to hold it in the 4th floor cafeteria.

Mr. Mills took a recess at 10:05pm and resumed the Public Hearing at 10:15pm.

2. **Application 208-06 Modification - WALTER WHEELER DRIVE SPE, LLC and THE STRAND/BRC GROUP, LLC** for approval of Modifications to approved Final Site and Architectural Plans and/or Requested Uses and Coastal Site Plan Approval to change the use from hotel to residential and other modifications to the site and architectural plans to develop a residential building with approximately 240 units, retail, parking, landscaping and related improvements.
3. **Application 213-35 – WALTER WHEELER DRIVE SPE, LLC, Text change,** to Amend Article III, Section 9 (J) (5) (a), to allow hotel use approved as part of a General Development Plan by the Zoning Board to be converted to, or replaced by, a residential use, provided that the number and square footage of residential units does not exceed the number and square footage of hotel rooms previously approved pursuant to the General Development Plan.
4. **Application 213-36 – Amended GDP – WALTER WHEELER DRIVE SPE, LLC and THE STRAND/BRC GROUP, LLC,** Block C8, Washington Blvd, Walter Wheeler Drive and Atlantic Street for approval of an Amendment of the approved General Development Plan related to the properties identified as Numbers 1-7 to construct a mixed use development with multiple buildings and associated improvements, and specifically to convert a hotel use to a residential use and to relocate 105 residential units from Block C8 to Block S3 within the development.

Mr. Mills read a description of the three applications into the record. Mr. Michelson read the Planning Board referral letter into the record.

Mr. Michelson questioned why the Zoning Board would review these applications given the outstanding Cease & Desist Order on a portion of the property in the GDP area. Mr. Mills said they've been advised that this Block (S3) already has an approval and it's proper to the Zoning Board to consider this amendment

Mr. Michelson asked if this is different because it is an amendment of the GDP.

Mr. Mills asked the Applicant if they would accept a condition to provide a hotel use on another block? Attorney John Freeman said no. They have no plans for a hotel.

Mr. Mills asked the Board how they felt about hearing the applications? Ms. McManus said yes. Mr. Michelson said no. Mr. Morris said yes. Mr. Stein said yes. Ms. Gwozdzowski said yes.

Attorney John Freeman explained the text amendment (same as Y1/Y3 text) which requests conversion of 125 hotel rooms to 75 units and to shift 105 units from Block C8 to Block S3. He explained the exterior materials would be unchanged. They will add a breezeway and the pool replaces the ballroom. They have a number of restaurants opening soon.

Mr. Mills said he'd like the ground floor to have more active uses.

Mr. Cole said the roof top mechanicals need enhancement and the parking management plan needs work.

Mr. Mills asked if anyone from the public wanted to comment.

Martin Levine, on behalf of the Downtown Special Services District, said he supported the application but asked that the entire hotel floor area be deducted and asked that the hotel use be eliminated from the Zoning Regulations under the SRD-S district.

David Cooper spoke about sewer connection funds and that all previous bills (WPCA, etc) be paid before any more work be allowed.

Maureen Boylan told the Board they should not grant any more approvals until the boatyard violation is resolved.

Mr. Mills announced that the Public Hearing on these applications would be continued to June 9 at 7:00pm on the 7th floor unless accommodations can be made to hold it in the 4th floor cafeteria.

REGULAR MEETING

Ms. McManus left the meeting and Mr. Mills seated both alternates; Mr. Stein and Ms. Gwozdzowski.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes for Approval: May 19, 2014

Mr. Mills tabled discussion and approval of minutes to the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Application 212-18 – TRINITY STAMFORD, LLC and THE CITY OF STAMFORD URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, 100 Summer Street and 0 Washington Blvd, Special Exceptions and Application 212-19 –

TRINITY STAMFORD, LLC and THE CITY OF STAMFORD URBAN REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, 100 Summer Street and 0 Washington Blvd, Site and Architectural Review, requesting approval for redevelopment of Parcels 19 and 19B to construct two new apartment buildings to include 417 dwelling units, 10,838 s.f. of ground floor retail, expanded parking and associated site improvements in the CC-N zone (*request for extension of time*).

Attorney Lisa Feinberg explained the need for a time extension on this application. After a brief discussion, Mr. Michelson made a motion to approve the extension of time request, seconded by Mr. Morris and the motion was unanimously approved 5 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris, Stein and Gwozdzowski).

2. Application 212-27 – Final Site & Architectural Plans and Coastal Site Plan Review (CSPR), Yale & Towne SPE, LLC, Final Site Plan and CSPR to construct a new six-story residential building containing 257 units, 338 parking spaces and associated improvements located at 120 Towne Street (Y3) in the SRD-N zone (*administrative review of exterior building material; ground floor*).

After a brief discussion, Mr. Morris made a motion to approve the proposed materials, seconded by Mr. Stein and the motion was unanimously approved 5 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris, Stein and Gwozdzowski).

Ms. Gwozdzowski made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Stein and the motion was unanimously approved 5 to 0 (Mills, Michelson, Morris, Stein and Gwozdzowski).

The meeting adjourned at 11:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Michelson, Secretary
Stamford Zoning Board